

What is claimed is:

- 1    1.    A method, comprising:  
2            requesting a password from a basic input-output system (BIOS), after  
3    loading an operating system kernel;  
4            receiving the password; and  
5            unlocking a hard drive with the password.
- 1    2.    The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:  
2            executing an initialization component in the operating system kernel; and  
3            loading a plurality of drivers.
- 1    3.    The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:  
2            determining whether the hard drive is locked;  
3            wherein requesting the password from the basic input-output system  
4    (BIOS) is performed after determining the hard drive is locked.
- 1    4.    The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the operating system kernel is  
2    loaded from a flash memory.
- 1    5.    The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:  
2            freezing a lock mechanism to prevent tampering with security  
3    parameters.
- 1    6.    The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the plurality of drivers include  
2    integrated device electronics (IDE) drivers.
- 1    7.    A system, comprising:  
2            a processor;  
3            a hard drive coupled to the processor;  
4            an operating system to execute on the processor;

5 a basic input-output system (BIOS) to execute on the processor;  
6 a password stored in the basic input-output system (BIOS) to unlock the  
7 hard drive; and  
8 a driver to execute from the operating system on the processor and to call  
9 the basic input-output system (BIOS) to retrieve the password.

1 8. The system as recited in claim 7, further comprising:  
2 a chassis intrusion mechanism to alternate between a secure mode and a  
3 maintenance mode;  
4 wherein the hard drive remains password protected in both the secure  
5 mode and the maintenance mode.

1 9. The system as recited in claim 7, wherein the password is a serial  
2 number.

1 10. The system as recited in claim 7, wherein the password is encrypted.

1 11. A machine-accessible medium having associated content capable of  
2 directing the machine to perform a method, the method comprising:  
3 receiving, by a basic input-output system (BIOS), a hard drive password  
4 request from an operating system;  
5 determining, by the basic input-output system (BIOS), if a system is in a  
6 maintenance mode;  
7 retrieving, by the basic input-output system (BIOS), a password, when  
8 the system is not in a maintenance mode;  
9 encrypting, by the basic input-output system (BIOS), the password; and  
10 passing, by the basic input-output system (BIOS), the encrypted  
11 password to the operating system.

1 12. The machine-accessible medium as recited in claim 11, further

2 comprising:  
3 requesting, by an integrated device electronics (IDE) driver, the  
4 password;  
5 receiving, by the integrated device electronics (IDE) driver, the encrypted  
6 password;  
7 wherein the integrated device electronics (IDE) driver is part of the  
8 operating system.

1 13. The machine-accessible medium as recited in claim 11, wherein the  
2 password is a system serial number.

1 14. A method, comprising:  
2 determining, by an operating system, that a hard drive is locked;  
3 receiving, by the operating system, a password from a basic input-output  
4 system (BIOS); and  
5 unlocking, by the operating system, the hard drive using the password.

1 15. The method as recited in claim 14, further comprising:  
2 determining, by the operating system, if the password is valid;  
3 wherein unlocking, by the operating system, the hard drive is performed  
4 only if the password is valid.

1 16. The method as recited in claim 14, further comprising:  
2 freezing, by the operating system, a lock mechanism for the hard drive.

1 17. A method, comprising:  
2 executing a basic input-output system (BIOS);  
3 loading an operating system kernel;  
4 executing the operating system kernel;  
5 loading at least one integrated device electronics (IDE) driver;  
6 querying a hard drive to determine if the hard drive is locked;

7           if the hard drive is locked, querying the basic input-output system (BIOS)  
8   for a password;  
9           returning the password from the basic input-output system (BIOS) to the  
10   at least one integrated device electronics (IDE) driver; and  
11           unlocking the hard drive.

1   18.    The method as recited in claim 17, further comprising:  
2           accessing the basic input-output system (BIOS) from the operating  
3   system kernel through a system interrupt.

1   19.    The method as recited in claim 18, further comprising:  
2           initializing the hard drive, after unlocking the hard drive.

1   20.    The method as recited in claim 18, wherein the computer system loads  
2   the operating system kernel in approximately three seconds.